

EFFICIENT HOUSEKEEPING

MODERN HOME WASHING

From a Correspondent

Many people do not realize the great strides that have been made recently in home washing equipment. But even where most of the household washing is sent out, there is always home laundering to be done. It is often preferred to have particularly fine underwear or woollens washed at home, and children make a certain amount of home washing imperative. Then, too, there are always special emergencies to be considered. Altogether, it is wise to bring the laundry equipment up to date, even if only on a small scale.

Much of the bother and fatigue that used to be associated with washing day was caused by the troublesome boiling of white materials and the consequent steamy atmosphere that resulted. There was also the trouble over drying, particularly on wet days, and the final ironing with the old-fashioned irons needing reheating and cleaning. None of these worries need exist now. A great deal of research has been done concerning the most efficient methods of home washing, and it is possible to obtain expert advice on the subject from two separate institutions. This advice may go so far as to re-plan the whole equipment, or merely to give help and information concerning methods, types of irons, and so on.

SENSIBLE PLANNING

Washing equipment, whether designed for a regular weekly wash or for occasional small batches of clothes, should be sensibly planned with all the materials close at hand in order to save unnecessary walking and fatigue.

Presuming that fairly regular washing is to be done, then a modern sink is an essential, deep and of the correct height to prevent backache. Next to this should come a small wash boiler, operated by gas or electricity and with a small wringer arranged so that clothes can be passed through from boiler to sink for rinsing. These modern boilers are designed to allow only the minimum, if any, of steam to escape, and as the new ways of washing necessitate only a few minutes' actual boiling, there need be no steamy atmosphere.

COOL WATER

The actual washing, particularly of fragile garments, should be in the coolest possible water. This is practicable now that excellent soap flakes are obtainable that lather in cold water. The whole secret of careful washing lies in the use of cool or moderately warm water (never hot) and the gentle kneading of the garments.

Boiling is advisable only for household linen or stronger materials. Another important point, particularly with woollen materials, is to keep all the washing and rinsing waters at approximately the same temperature. Cool waters with the appropriate soap added, either in flakes or finely shredded, can remove all normal dirt, and it is never advisable to allow fine garments to become extremely soiled.

The majority of materials nowadays are fast in colour, and many manufacturers add their own washing advice on the label.

If there is any doubt, however, it is wise to soak the garments in water to which a few dessertspoonfuls of vinegar or salt have been added. The addition of household ammonia is useful in the case of particularly dirty garments, and is also effective in the last rinsing water for woollens, making them soft and fluffy.

CARE OF KNITTED CLOTHES

When we come to drying, particular care is needed for knitted clothes. They should not be wrung by hand, but squeezed, and, if a wringer is used, it should be adjusted to give only light pressure while the garment is folded loosely in a dry towel. Such clothes must never be hung up and allowed to drip. They must either be spread out in the air on a clean towel, or placed as flat as possible in a heated cupboard. Generally it is safest to dry all washing as quickly as possible.

Where outdoor drying is impossible, either because the weather is wet or the atmosphere dirty, a drying cabinet is ideal. A new electric drying cabinet is now on the market that will dry a fairly large batch of clothes sufficiently for comfortable ironing in one hour. This does away with the necessity for "damping down." The cabinet is useful, too, for drying outdoor clothes in wet weather.

QUICK DRYING

Whatever methods of drying are adopted, it is best to dry quickly, and to dry with air currents rather than direct sunlight, for this is proved to be detrimental to most fibres. Again, it is wasteful to over-dry, as most materials are best ironed slightly damp. The exceptions are knitted materials, cotton crepe, and tussore silk.

Ironing to-day need not be a toil. There are excellent irons that are operated by gas and electricity. It is worth while taking the advice of the local showrooms of the gas or electricity company as they usually have the most up-to-date equipment in stock and can give technical help concerning the best type for any particular consumer. One iron in particular is of interest in that it can be regulated to give the correct heat for every type of material. The control switch is marked "Linen, cotton, wool." Thus all risk of scorching is eliminated.

AUTOMATIC IRONS

There is also another automatic iron that cannot scorch. Even if a good electric iron is already in use it is worth while finding out if it is not, in reality, out of date. For a fairly small sum it is possible to buy a really modern iron, and these irons, being more economical in the consumption of current, soon repay their cost.

In connexion with ironing, certainly invest in a good ironing board and a sleeve board. They are so cheap nowadays, the best being fitted with an asbestos iron stand, and do make ironing pleasant and possible everywhere without taking up table room. It is also possible to place them in the best light without difficulty.

Efficient Housekeeping.

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The Times (London, England), Monday, Nov 07, 1938; pg. 17; Issue 48145. (982 words)

Category: Arts and Entertainment

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Gale Document Number:CS285422439